



Sgt. Paul McCully, right, explains proper room-clearing techniques to a SAW gunner during training on Range 31.

## Basics

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"About 65 percent of our Soldiers are fresh out of AIT," noted Capt. Mark Ivezaj, commander of Co. B.

"The guys that were squad members during the deployment to Iraq are now team leaders and the team leaders are now squad leaders and we're trying to pass on their knowledge," he added.

*"Basically, we're just trying to teach them what we learned in Iraq and what to expect — especially what not to do."*

Spc. Matt Hewitt noted that what the troops learned at basic training is just a starting point.

"Once they come to a unit, especially one that's specialized like ours, there's a lot to teach them," he said.

A combination of walk-throughs, blank runs and live-fire taught the teams the basics, reinforced what the veterans already knew and helped the team leaders identify issues they needed to work on with their

Soldiers. The layout of the range had the teams engaging targets on the approach to the town and moving through various rooms and buildings once they cleared the initial engagement.

After each iteration, the leaders would make suggestions for improvements.

"It's something that takes time, and you have to practice — you just have to do it and do it. They're going to get picked apart, but it will open their eyes," said McCully.



Photos by Jason Kaye

Spc. Derek Hult a team leader in the 2nd Squad, 3rd Platoon looks for targets during an exercise on Range 31. Soldiers from Co. B, 3rd Bn., 21st Inf. were at the range to practice team-level urban operations.

The training is part of all the tasks the brigade needs to complete as they prepare for a move to Vilseck, Germany.

"The only challenge is balancing the amount of time we have to train and get ready to go to Germany. We want to take care of families, and as the list of what we need to do grows, it's a balance between reset and redeploy," said Ivezaj.

He added that the unit's priorities were taking care of families and getting Soldiers to schools.



Spc. Matt Hewitt watches the upper floors of a building while moving his team down a street on Range 31.